

HUMAN EVENTS

26 May 1984

THIS WEEK'S NEWS FROM



Inside Washington

CBS News Conceals Identity of CIA Critic

Ignoring the demand of full disclosure that it tries to impose on other institutions in American society, the CBS Evening News last week concealed the true identity and background of a key source in a two-part series attacking the CIA. The source was portrayed as just a researcher or scholar, when, in fact, he is the hippie-like editor of a publication that seeks the abolition of the CIA.

The series, which aired on the nights of May 14

and 15, focused on charges that the CIA was involved in a Hawaii-based investment firm, Bishop-Baldwin, that went bankrupt last year. Among other things, according to correspondent Barry Peterson, the firm was involved in arranging the sale of sophisticated arms to the Republic of China on Taiwan.

Peterson claimed that company records "obtained by CBS News" showed that "CIA agents, claiming to be Bishop-Baldwin employees, traveled worldwide [and] negotiated a major arms deal with Taiwan—tanks and planes and other military equipment—a deal the U.S. government couldn't make openly without damaging U.S. relations with [Communist] China."

Such a deal, if it was attempted, is now dead, thanks to CBS News. But the real target of the report was clearly the CIA. Peterson introduced someone he identified as John Kelly, who "has studied the CIA for a decade, including Bishop-Baldwin."

"I concluded that it was a major CIA operation," Kelly told the viewers of CBS. "I would characterize it as covering pretty much the full spectrum of CIA operations, including domestic operations, which, of course, are illegal. The CIA is prohibited by its charter from conducting operations within the confines of the United States."

The viewers of CBS were left with the impression, encouraged by Peterson, that some intellectual-type had come to the scholarly conclusion

that the CIA had been engaging in criminal activities on a large scale.

But the identification of Kelly as just a student of the CIA is like saying that Walter Mondale has merely applied for a job in the White House. Kelly has studied the CIA all right, but he has studied the agency with the intention of destroying it.

Kelly, in fact, is an editor of the notorious publication, *CounterSpy*, which, in its statement of purpose, attacks the CIA as an institution that "has systematically violated the fundamental rights and freedoms of people in this country and the world over." *CounterSpy* has consistently and openly advocated the abolition of the CIA.

For many years, before the Congress outlawed the practice, *CounterSpy* published the names of purported CIA agents, thus making them vulnerable to terrorist attack. The magazine's exposure of CIA agent Richard Welch preceded his murder by terrorists in Greece in 1975.

Kelly began his association with the magazine in 1976, when it published an article in which he claimed that the U.S. had "committed systematic war crimes and crimes against humanity on a daily basis" during the Vietnam War. Kelly was identified as a member of a group called the War Crimes Project.

At the time, one of *CounterSpy*'s associate editors was Philip Agee, the defector from the CIA—who has worked with Communist-bloc intelligence services against United States interests around the world.

Agee and his associates ceased publication of *CounterSpy* in early 1978, and formed another anti-CIA magazine, *Covert Action Information Bulletin*.

But *CounterSpy* re-emerged in 1979 under the editorship of John Kelly and Konrad Ege.

For Kelly and Ege, it's the United States, not the Soviet Union, which is the threat to world peace. *CounterSpy* has tried to dismiss or discredit charges that the Soviet Union uses chemical warfare, maintains slave labor camps, and conducts "active measures" campaigns of propaganda and

Continued

disinformation against the U.S.

But *CounterSpy* itself has been involved in propaganda campaigns. A few years ago, for example, a Soviet newspaper cited *CounterSpy* Editor Ege as its source for the charge that the CIA was interfering in Afghanistan. Ege, in turn, had based his charges on material published in the Soviet media.

A January 1982 dispatch carried by the Soviet news agency *Tass* cited *CounterSpy* as its source for the charge that the Pentagon and the CIA were conducting experiments in "germ warfare."

But the main target of Ege, Kelly and their associates is the American media. It has been fully documented, for example, that Kelly was a source of story ideas and documents for two *Wall Street Journal* reporters, Jonathan Kwitny and the late Jerry Landauer.

Last week's series on the CBS Evening News, however, has to be considered one of Kelly's biggest scores. The reports, as CBS acknowledged, were actually produced in cooperation with the British Broadcasting Corp. (BBC), a fact that for some people must have added credibility to the series.

Yet, the BBC label may also be misleading. Last month, Kelly was scheduled to speak at a seminar at the far-left Institute for Policy Studies in Washington, where the topic was the showing of a new BBC video, "Company Business," about "CIA-corporate collusion." The IPS flier about the event identified Kelly as not only an editor of *CounterSpy*, but also a "BBC investigator."

Was Kelly the driving force behind both the BBC and the CBS programs?

Efforts to reach correspondent Barry Peterson and John Kelly were unsuccessful. Curiously, when we contacted Films Incorporated, the U.S. distributor of BBC programs, an acquisitions assistant by the name of Janet Plein said the video wasn't available because BBC "won't release it." She apparently wasn't aware that Kelly had been scheduled to show it in Washington and that parts of it had made the CBS Evening News.

Kelly himself may want to complain to CBS that he wasn't given the "credit" he deserved for putting the package together. He can thank CBS, however, for making him look good. His camera shots on the broadcast were carefully taken from the front only, because side shots would have revealed that his hair is pulled back into a rather long ponytail.

